

Consumer Alert!

From the Tennessee Division of Consumer Affairs

615-741-4737 or toll free 800-342-8385

www.state.tn.us/consumer

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Contact:
David McCollum
Chris Allen

Tennesseans Target of Nigerian Advance Fee Fraud

Nashville, Tenn.—The Tennessee Division of Consumer Affairs has received complaints from businesses and individuals who have received letters, faxes, and e-mails this week offering an international get-rich-quick scheme. The sender claims to be a Nigerian government official with over \$30 million in Nigerian government funds. The letter offers 30 percent of the money if you provide a U. S. bank account number to which the funds may be transferred.

“This is a dangerous scam. Consumers could suffer irreversible financial harm if they respond,” said Dave McCollum, Consumer Affairs Director. “Tennesseans should never give personal or financial information to unknown individuals or businesses.”

If a recipient of one of these letters responds, the bank account may be drained immediately. Other victims of this scam have been asked to send money to cover the expense of the transfer. Some victims have been asked to travel to Nigeria and neighboring countries. They are told that they will not need a visa, or that one will be provided upon arrival. In fact, Nigerian law requires a visa for entry and departure from the country, and airport visas are not available. According to the U. S. Department of State, individuals participating in the scheme have been the victims of extortion and violence while in Nigeria.

If you receive a similar letter, fax, or e-mail DO NOT RESPOND. Fax a copy of the item to the Nashville office of the United States Secret Service at (615) 736-5848.

Consumer Tips Regarding Personal Information:

- Never give personal information (Social Security Number, bank account number, or credit card number) to unknown individuals or businesses.
- Pay close attention to your bank and credit card statements. Early detection is imperative if your accounts are being used fraudulently.
- Report any fraudulent activity immediately.

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